

The Morāns.—By MAJOR P. R. T. GURDON, *Superintendent of Ethnography in Assam*.

[Read June, 1903.]

Mr. Gait in the Census Report of 1891 stated that it is evident that the Morāns belong to the great Bodo group; at the time of that Census I made a collection of a few Morān words which I forwarded to the Census Superintendent, who was of opinion that Morān is only a variety of Bodo or Kachāri. That this diagnosis was right there will be little doubt if the vocabulary attached to this note is examined. It will be seen that I have given the English with its Morān, Kachāri (modern), Dimāsā or Hills Kachāri, and Hodgson's Bodo, (which is probably Mech), equivalents. At once the very strong affinity between the four languages will be evident. Take the numerals. "One" is the same in all four languages, *e. g.*, *Sē*, *Sē* or *Sāi*, *Si* and *Chē*. The word *nē* (two), in Morān and Kachāri becomes *gini* in Dimāsā and *gni* in Mech. *Sam* (three) in Morān becomes *Tham* in Kachāri, *gatham* in Dimāsā, and *tham* in Mech. The word for six is the same in all four languages. The word for fish, *nā*, which is identical in the first three languages becomes *gnā* in Hodgson's Bodo, and compare the Burmese *gnāpi* and the Garo *nāthu*. The word for "Egg" in all four languages is *Daodi*, and what is still more remarkable, each of the four languages expresses the word for egg in exactly the same manner, *dao* meaning fowl and *di* water, *dao-di* therefore signifies fowl's water. With reference to *dao*, it may be noted that it is a generic word, *daokhā* meaning a crow, being evidently an onomatopœic sound, *daokha* signifying the "caw-caw" bird.

There seems to have been a considerable amount of confusion regarding the Morāns. In the Census Report of 1881 it was stated that the meaning of the word Morān is not very clear, but that the name Morān was applied to the upper portion of the Matak country and is now used to designate the extensive tract of waste land to the East and North-East of

Dibrugarh. The Morāns are mentioned in an Assamese Buranji as having been subdued by the Ahom invader in 1251 A. D. Robinson says that the word Morān signifies "inhabitant of the jungle". In the 1891 Census Report Mr. Gait wrote as follows: "There has been a good deal of confusion between the terms 'Morān, Matak, and Moamaria.'" The Morāns have already been referred to as having been the first tribe to be conquered by the Ahoms when they entered Assam from over the Patkai. They were employed by the Ahom Kings as carriers of fire-wood and were known as Hābungīās, an Ahom or rather an Assamese corruption, of the Moran word *habóng* (mán). A writer in the Jonaki Magazine of April 1891 is of opinion that the "Morāns are the autochthons of the Assam Valley," a conclusion which I think is not unlikely to prove correct. The strong similarities of the different languages of the Bodo group I have detailed below, need no further demonstration than the lists will show; and it appears that the Morān language certainly belongs to the Bodo or Kachāri group. Before concluding I may mention that there seems to be also some connection between the languages of the Bodo group and Deori-Chutiyā, which is now like Moran practically a dead language, originally spoken by the priestly or Levite class among the Chutiyās (Introduction to Brown's Deori-Chutiyā Grammar). Take the following words which I have picked out from Brown's Vocabulary:—

English.	Deori-Chutiyā.	Plains Kachāri.
Fowl	du	dāo
Cat	midige	manzi
Tiger	mesa	mosā
Deer	meshi	masamai
Snake	dubra	Zibu { Dimāsā Jubu
Dove	duchu dua	douthō
Crow	duka	daokhā

If the equivalents in Hodgson's Bodo or Mech, and Dimāsā are studied, great similarity will be found. No doubt it would be possible to trace similarities between words in Garo, for the Garo language belongs to the Bodo group also.

I think, in conclusion, that strong linguistic affinity has been proved between the Morān, Kachāri, Dimāsā (Hills Kachāri), and Hodgson's Bodo or Mech; it now remains to discuss whether or not there are similarities between these tribes from an Ethnographical point of view, but this must form the subject of another paper.

English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsā (or Hills Kachāri).
A.				
Adze	Phāsi	Sānsan	.....	Gāphā
Adze (small)	Hatahi sās]	San san fisa*	.....	.....
Arrow	Bālathi	Khār	Balla	Bālā
Ants	Musirim	Masram	{ Mōcharām Hashafrāi	Gāsīm (black) Gājāo (red)
Acid	Mekhari	Gakhoi	.....	Sabāoba
Alkaline	Khari	.....	.....	.....
Axe	Rāoyā	Rua	Rūā	Roā
Areca nuts	Kanai or nai	Goi	.....	Goai
Arum	Khadun	.....	.....	.....
Ask (v)	Hāmong	Sāngnū	.....	Sūng
Angry (v)	Hakhi-Tang	Barapnū	.....	Thamsi baigo (angry-get)
B.				
Buffalo	Mānini, Michit	Moisya	Moishojola	Miship
Bear	Dāogomā	Mafūr	Mūphūr	Musuburmā
Beard	Khāmār	Khukhap-in- dāri	Dadhi	Khamphōr
Brother-in- law (eldest sister's hus- band)	Kumi	Gumāi	.....	Bigimi
Brother-in- law (young- est sister's husband)	Lundā	Bainai	.....	Bigimi
Brother-in- law (wife's younger brother)	.....	Boinai	.....	Bobrāolung
Do. elder brother	.....	Gumoi	.....	Bigimi
Brother (elder)	Akai	A-dā	.....	Dādā
Brother (younger)	Bhai	Agoi	.....	Ajang or Bu- faiyung.

* i.e., "Adze's child."

English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsā.
Bow	Kangphāi	Zilit	Jillit	Baithuli
Be (v)	Dang	Dang (-is 𑜋𑜨𑜃𑜫)	.....	Dōng
Bring (v)	Lethā	Lānū	.....	Labu
Bite (v)	Challa	Atnū(ar-nū)	.....	Wāi
Beat (v)	Bniha	Bu-nū	.....	Shu
Bathe (v)	Dukutha	Du-gūi-nū	.....	Dūgrū
Burn (v)	Khamong	Sān-nū	.....	Sān
Beautiful	Hāmmā	Mozāng	Mōjāng	Mazāng-ba
Black	Kisim	Gasam	Gotchom	Gūsūm
Blind	Khārā	Megān khānă	Kana	Gānā
Bad	Hāmi hā	Hama	Hamma	Hāmyā
Brave	Khatia	Ha raga	Gironga	Kharāobi
Bitter	Rūong	Gākha	Gakha	Khābā
Burnt	Sayaya	Ornang-nai	.....	Khāmbā
Betel-leaf	Fathai or Fatai	Fathai	.....	Mithi
Blackpepper	Talup	Zabrang	Jātimarich	Morchaigibi
Bed	Seean	Khat	.....	Thūthāni
Bowl	Soucha	Khuroi	.....	Bela
Basket	Fachi	Khirkao	.....	Khāngkhrā
Do. (small)	Khoura	Khirkha f'sa	.....	Do.
Broom	Haisip	Hāsip	.....	Noship
Bamboo	Haiong	Oa (Owā)	.....	Wa
Boy	Tadai	Gāthā	.....	Quchhā
Bridge	Hokbai	Sangkhang	.....	Yaokhārai

C.

Cow	Machan	Machan	Mūshojo	Mūshū
Cat	{ Ningrāo } { Maoti }	Māuzi	Mauji	Ālu
Civet-cat	Mejengā	Ban āfā (Hāfā)	Mūrū	Mūrū
Crow	Daokhā	Daokhā	Daukhā	Doakhā
Crane	Dāob	.....	.....	Sola Khak
Clay, mud	Hā dubut	Hābru	Habdu	Didāp
Creeper	Dausing	Teowa	.....	Dukha
Comb (v)	Khāng fai	Khān-nu	.....	Rāw
Cook (v)	Sogong	Sang-nu	.....	Sōng
Cut (v)	Daula	Dāu-nū	.....	{ Gain Dain }
Catch (v)	Ga-goang	Ham-un	.....	Rum

English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsā.
Cloth	Hinkhā	Hi	Hi	Ri
Cooking-pot	Defee	Mikham-du	.....	Makham du
Curtain		Hi Khungnai	.....	Ri sung- phungba
Cotton-gin	Fandap	.....	.....	Sergi
Comb	Khansong	Khanzang	.....	Khōchong
Cane	Rai	Raidang	.....	Wadu
Chisel	Bāisāli	Baithli	.....	Dāobu

D.

Dog	Chaimā	Suimāi	Choima	Sishā
Duck	Hangkhā	Hāngsa fāthai	Hāngsa	Dasphlamdu
Deer	Hāomā, Mashā, Mung	Masamai	Mōchō	Mösō, Mishai
Deer (spotted)	Mechai	Kaore fithāi	Macho	Mishong
Dove	Dāothu	Daothu	Danthō	Daophri
Die (v)	Thilā	Thoi-nū	.....	Thi
Deaf	Nābāng	Khāmā beng- gā	Bēnga	Nathong
Dhuti	Khisrai	Gāmsa	Gamcha	Gainthāo.
Da (big knife)	Hanguchā, Hansāi	Sekhā	Chikha	Sishong
Daughter	Bisari	Fisā-zu	Bishu	Bāsū

E.

Elephant	Mātmā or Manimā	.....	Moidet	Miyang
Egg	Dāodi	Dāodē	Doudoi	Dāodi
Eye	Muthai	Mēgan	Mogon	Mū
Ear	Khāmā	Khāmā	Khomā	Khamāo
Earth	Hā	Hā	Hā	Hā
Evening	Mālā	Manahai	Bili	Saiūbili
Eat (v)	Tifai	Zānū	.....	Ťi

F.

Fowl	Dāomā	Dāo { Ma (great) (full-grown) Sā (small) chicken }	Dou	{ Dāonajela Daono Daono-khase- ba
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English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsa.
Fish	Nā	Nā	Gnā	Nā
Frog	Tunglerup	Imbu (Imblon)	Imbū bōnglā	Hembru Khoroma (very big) Gāolem.
Father	Abai	Āfā	Aphā	Bōfā
Father's younger sister	Māni	Ānē	.....	Dēdē
Father or mother's elder sister, or mother's younger sister.	Barai	<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">Āi-yang</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">{</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">Ā-de</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">}</div> </div> </div>	.....	Maiyung
Fire	Hat	Ath	Wāt	Wai
Forest	Hakrā	Hagra gedu	.....	Hāgrā
Field	Faiaya	Dubli (rice-field)	.....	Hadi (rice-field)
Flower	Khum	Bebar	Bibar	Khum (in the plain) Khim (in this subdivision)
Fruit	Bithai	Fithai	Bethai	Bathai
Fear (v)	Khanui	Gi-nū	.....	Khin
Fall (v)	Kalaila	Goglai-nū	.....	Gālai
Fetch (v)	Lābaha	Lai-nū thang-nū	.....	Lābū
Feel thirst (v)	Dikangung	Dōi-gang-nū	.....	Gāngbā
Feel hungry (v)	Miam Sakhiung	Moikham bkhui-nu	.....	Hukhri
Forgive (v)	Sahiba	Rakya-hānū	.....	Gār
Fried	Sariya	Megongdō	.....	Jembā
Fan	Tihit	Gisip	.....	Gisip
Fishing net	Chā	Zeh	.....	Cheh
Fuel	Ban	Ban	Bōn
Fever	Lumia	Lam Zanai	Lumba

G.

Goat	Bārūmā	Baramā	Būrmā	Burūn
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English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsā.
Grandchild or Grand- father	Ālū	{ Ābaū Ābaū	Bihon Alo	Busuthāi Dāidāi
Go (v)	Thān-khēng	Thang-nū	.....	Thāng
Give (v)	Karai	Hu-nu	.....	Ri
Good	Madhumong	Gaharra	Ghām	Hāmbā
Great	Dikma	Gadat	.....	Gēdēbā
Ginger	Haiteng	Haizeng	Haijeng	Hajeng
Gourd	Kha-khulu	Laogakha	Lau	Lāothai
Girt	Taiti	Hinākhāo-sa	.....	Masāin chu
Gentleman	Madai	Giri	.....	Gedēbā
Goitre	Kidit	Galandhi	.....	Gödödēbā
Gold	Darbi	Darbi	.....	Gajao
Grandmother	Ālē	Aboi	Aboi	Daidai

H.

Horse	Karāi	Gorāi	Gorai thāngan	Gorai
Hog	Hawmā, Samā	Omā	Yoma	Hawnā
Huluk	Huilao	.....	.....	Hulāo
Husband	Bisai	Hū-a (nu-ā)	Bishai	Basāi
Head	Har	Khārā	Khōrō	Khōrō
Hair	Khānāi	Khēnai	Khanai	Khanāi
Hoe	Khudi	Khuroi	Doukhi	Khudi
		(Khodal)		
Heaven	Dāusā	Akhrangsa	Nōkhorāng	Nākhāsāo
Hail	Langthai	Arathai	Krothai	Gēdithai
Hear (v)	Khānālong	Khñā-nū	.....	Khanā
Have (v)	Aye	Dang-a (with possession)	.....	Dāng
Husking machine	Dengkhi	Dingkhi	.....	Sāmtho
Hat	Khanlūk	Khafroi	.....	Khailung
Honey	Bara	Berema-ni- bidoi	.....	Beredi
Hedge	Tareng	Īnzur	.....	Bāri
Hump-backed	Kusā	Sing khuza	Teng khong gabai

I.

Iguana	Mufu	Mafu	Mūphō	Mūshubū
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English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsā.
J.				
Jackal	Chengāroo, Chengāli	Syel	Siyāl	Māsrāng
Jack-fruit	Thaifeng	Khanthal fithai	.....	Thāi phiyung
K.				
Keep (v)	Deu	Rākhi-nũ	.....	Mathāo
Kill (v)	Thadiase	Bu-that-nũ	.....	Dothai
.....	Khumdaifang	.....	.....	.....
Knife	Khātāri	Dāhā (Khātri)	Dāhā	Sishong sa
L.				
Leg	Hakong	Ātheng	Gnāthēng	Yēgā
Lightning	Fālāmdang	Mablip-dang	Mūphlāmo	Sarāp thāi
Love (v)	Maram-hang	Au-nu	.....	Khāshāo
Laugh (v)	Mini-yang	Mini-nu	.....	Mini
Lid, cover	Sethai	Khup-nai	.....	Phungyābā
Loom	Sesanhāl	Sal (nal)	.....	Bōrōn
Lime	Chuni	Sunoi	.....	Thaisa
Leaf of plain- tain	Lie	Bilai	.....	Lai
M.				
Monkey	Mukhārā	Mokhrā	Mokhora	Māsgusā
Mouth	Thānshup	Khuga	Khouga	Khū
Mother	Āi	Āi	Ayā	Bōmā
Moon	Dāu	Akhābar	Nōkhabir	Daiũ (<i>i.e.</i> , nasal)
Mountain, Hill	Hausi	Hazu	Hājo	Hāju
Moonlight night	Dan-bedung	Dan orang- srang	.....	Nokhābleng
Morning	Maila	Nakha naibai	Phājāni	Phorōng
Mustard	Tine	Besar	.....	Suludi
Melon	Haibenang	Kumara	.....	Thāisuma phānā
Maize	Maikhum	Gum-mai	.....	Mangalai
Mat	Iyam	Em	.....	Sādāh
Man	Habung	Mausoi	.....	Subung

English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsā.
Molasses	Kabdi	Mithai	.....	Gurudī
Meat, flesh	Mahon	Bidat	.....	Mөггөng
Money	Rukai	Thākhā	.....	Rang
N.				
Nose	Kungthang	Gauthāng	Gūnthūng	Gūng
Neck	Kud	Gade	.....	Gödö
New	Kadang	Gadan	.....	Gadanī (nasal)
O.				
Owl	Dāokhu	Phesai	Daukhū	Daokhu
Old	Kara	Bārāi (brai)	Braï, Buroï	Garāsā
Obedient	Khauthai, Khorang	Khuasānga	.....	Garāolōrē
Old	Katam	Barai	Braï, Buroï	Gājām
Onion	Haiserang	Sambaam	.....	Sāmphrāng
Oil	Thau	Thao	.....	Thao
P.				
Porcupine	Mechai	Madē	Mūdōi	Midi
Parrot	Phāth	Bātha	Batho	Bato
Pigeon	Phārāo	Pharāo	Pario	Dāophri
Paternal uncle's wife	Mādi	Ānē	.....	(Bo)-Madi
Pursue (v)	Khariung	Un-ūn hasee- lang-nu	.....	Rushāi
Pulse	Sabai	Sabai	Shobaima	Sabai
Plantain	Thailuk	Thalit fithai	Thali, Lai- phang	Thailu (k)
Paddy	Māi	Mai	Mai	Mai
Potato	Tha	Tha	Bilati tha	Thathāi
Pumpkin	Lauthai	Lau	.....	Khao khula- gufa
Pumpkin (red)	Kumuru	Lao gadoi	.....	Khao khula gajao
Pillow	Safrong	Gandu	.....	Gāndu
Poison	Sang	Bih	.....	Mōli
Pond, tank or well	Dikhor	Doi khor	.....	Khārnāi

English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsā.
Q.				
R.				
Rat	Romdā, Jyungchat	Inzatbonggā	Injūd	Möchō
Red ants	Kise	Mazalu	.....	.....
River	Disā	Dūi-sa	Doi, Doispa	Dikhong (small nulla) Disa
Rain	Nakhā	Nakhā	Nōkhā	Hādi
Read or to sing (v)	Kayung	Razāp-nū	.....	Rājā (no word for read)
Rub oil (v)	Thau sufai	Thāo fan-nū	.....	Thāojang hu (oil with rub)
Run away (v)	Thalla or Khat-lang	Khat-lang-nū	.....	Khai
Rise (v)	Khāttā	Gasang-nu	.....	Bājā
Red	Kata	Gāzā	Gatcha	Gajāo
Rich	Bādamā	Girigadat	Dhonganang	Gānāng
Rotten	Sauong	Gesyau	Gēchēō	Gāsāo
Rice (cooked)	Miam	Ikhām (Mib- hām.)	.....	Makhām
Reed	Khaseng	Meowa	.....	Bādun
Rice (uncook- ed)	Mairung	Mairang	.....	Mairong
Rice-flour (pounded)	Towal	Gundui	.....	Hon
Ring	Hachidam	Astham	.....	Yao stam
S.				
Snake	Tubu	Zibon	Jibo	Jubu
Squirrel	Mangdād	Kerkethā	Māntāp	Mandap
Stomach	Hadai	Udāi	Bhāndār	How or Hō
Son	Bisā	Fisā (fsā)	Bisha	Basā
Sickle	Khāsi	Khāsi	Kāchi	Songi
Stone	Lanthāi	Anthāi	Onthai	Lonthāi
Sand	Hāseng	Bāli	Bālā	Hajeng

English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsā.
Star	Hāthrāi	Ha thor-khi	Hāthotki	Hathrāi
Sun	Sān	Shān*	Shāu	Saiũ (do)
Sun's rays	Sanhang-yong	Sān-nigrahan	.....	.....
Speak (v)	Lekhayung	Bung-nũ	.....	Thi
Sleep (v)	Thu sing	Udu-nu	.....	Thu
Salute (v)	Khulum	Khalam-nũ	.....	Khulum
Sell (v)	Fangug	Fan-nu	.....	Phain
Sweep (v)	Hibong	Sip-nũ	.....	Hāsip
Suckle (v)	Alan tong	Ahār-daũ-nũ	.....	Aleujiri
Smell (v)	Sengma	Manām-nu	.....	Bahailābā
Strong	Kumma	Balagra	Balagra	Rāobi
Sweet	Thanma	Gudōi	Gadōi	Diba
Sugar cane	Kara	Khusyar	.....	Guru
Stool	Khāmfelai	Khamflai	.....	Khamphlāi
Stove	Dapthai	Atsugra agdat	.....	Hāgāh
Spoon	Khoka	Samus	.....	Khāokhū
Stirring-rod	Sah	Kharo	... ..	Khudu
Spining wheel	Tengthar	Ugai	.....	Jenther
Sieve	Sārin	Sandroi (Dala)	.....	Sāng khon
Stick	Hutumum	Laru	.....	Goda
Sister (elder)	Ābi	Adā	.....	Bibi
Do. (youn-ger)	Nānāo	Ā-goi	.....	Bahāndāo
Salt	Sam	Sangkhre	.....	Sem
.....	Sarangfang	.....	.....	.....
Skin	Khong	Bigur	.....	Būgūr
Spear	Yāng	Zang	.....	Jong

T.

Tiger	Māochi, Michi	Mosā	Mochā	Misi
Tortoise	Khesāo	Thāsa	Khūbchūng	Yādo or thō- rōgā
Tooth	Hāfāi	Hāthai	Hāthai	Hāthāi
Tongue	Selāi	Sālai	Chālai	Salāi
Thunder	Fakawala	Akhā khram dang	Kharammo	Nakhasai- gurumba
Timber	Heng-fang	Bang fang gran	Bonphang	Wa bofāng

* Sh is an aspirated sibilant letter.

English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's Bodo.	Dimāsā.
Thrust (v)	Salā	Sũ-nũ	.....	Ĵao
Taken	Keleng khow	Lāng-nai	.....	Lākhā
Tub	Harum	Dabar	.....	Merong
Tree	Fang	Bang fang	.....	Bophāng
Thatch	Thibi	Thoroi	.....	Nūkhūm
.....	Taramfang	.....	.....	.....
Thief	Sikhow	Sikhao	.....	Makhāo

U.

V.

Vulture	Nāngrā	Sugan	Sigūn	Nāwai
Vegetables	Makdi	Megang	.....	Sāmlāi

W.

Wife's brother	Bihi	Hin-zāo	Bihi	Bihi
Water	Di	Dũi (Dõi)	Doi	Di
Wind	Bātā	Bāo	Bār	Bār
Weep (v)	Kābung	Gāb-nũ	.....	Gārā
Wear (v)	Penung or Sungug	Gān-nu	.....	Gaiu (in nasal)
Went	Khuho	Thang-bai	.....	Thāng khā
White	Kufut	Gāfūt	Gukhut	Gūfū
Water-jar	Dirmā	Dihu	.....	Dihu (earthen- jar) Didu (brass- jar)
Woman (old)	Kāsi	Bāroi	.....	Garāchu
Woman (young)	Sekhala	Sekhala	.....	Masainchu radei
One	Sē	Sē (Sũi)	Che	Si
Two	Ne	Nē (nũi)	Gui	Gini
Three	Sām	Thām	Tham	Gathām
Four	Biri	Brē (Brũi)	Bre	Biri
Five	Bāha	Bā	Bā	Bowā
Six	Do	Rā (dā)	Dā	Dā (daw)

English.	Morān.	Kachāri.	Hodgson's	Dimāsā.
Seven	Sini	Sni (sini)	Sini	Sini
Eight	Sak	Zat	.....	Chāi
Nine	Saku (zi-kho)	Yaũ (zǎ)	.....	Suku
Ten	Ti	Tit	.....	ǃi
Eleven	Tisi	.....	.....	ǃise
Twelve	Ti Ne	.....	.....	ǃi gini

